Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) An instant messaging method comprising the steps of:

selecting ~~at least one~~ a group of subscriber~~s~~ of an instant messaging service~~,~~ ~~wherein said subscriber is in an inactive state~~;

designating at least one action for an instant messaging client to automatically perform in response to a state of a subscriber changing to a specified state;

associating said designated action with said group;

automatically detecting that a state change of at least one of said subscribers in said group ~~changes to an~~ is the specified state ~~change~~; and

automatically executing said designated action associated with said group for said at least one subscriber responsive to said detecting step.

2.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said action is an instant messaging initiation action that initiates an instant messaging session between said client and said at least one subscriber.

3.   (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said action includes at least one action selected from the group consisting of a notification action, a prompting action, and a message conveyance action.

4.   (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1, wherein said selecting, said designating, said associating, said detecting, and said executing steps are performed by

2

said instant messaging client.

5.   (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said instant messaging client includes a Lotus Sametime (TM) type client.

6-7.   (Cancelled).

8.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, ~~further comprising the step of: designating at least one inactive state associated with said designated action,~~ wherein said specified state change results from a <u>state</u> change <u>for said at least one subscriber</u> from ~~the designated~~ <u>one or more possible inactive</u> state<u>s</u> to [[said]] <u>one or more possible</u> active state<u>s</u>.

9.   (Cancelled)

10.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, <u>wherein said at least one action</u> further ~~comprising the step of:~~ <u>comprises</u> presenting within a graphical user interface a list of <u>said</u> subscribers <u>in said group</u>~~, wherein said list includes at least one subscriber that is in an active state, and wherein said list includes said selected subscriber;~~ and   within said graphical user interface, visually distinguishing said ~~selected~~ <u>at least one</u> subscriber from other subscribers in said list.

11.   (Currently Amended) A ~~machine-readable~~ <u>computer-readable</u> storage having stored thereon, a computer program having a plurality of code sections, said code sections executable by a ~~machine~~ <u>computer</u> for causing the ~~machine~~ <u>computer</u> to perform the steps of:

selecting at least one a group of subscribers of an instant messaging service, wherein said subscriber is in an inactive state;

designating at least one action for an instant messaging client to automatically perform in response to a state of a subscriber changing to a specified state;

associating said designated action with said group;

automatically detecting that a state change of at least one of said subscribers in said group changes to an is the specified state change; and

automatically executing said designated action associated with said group for said at least one subscriber responsive to said detecting step.

12.   (Currently Amended) The machine-readable computer-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said action is an instant messaging initiation action that initiates an instant messaging session between said client and said one subscriber.

13.   (Currently Amended) The machine-readable computer-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said action includes at least one action selected from the group consisting of a notification action, a prompting action, and a message conveyance action.

14.   (Currently Amended) The machine-readable computer-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said selecting, said designating, said associating, said detecting, and said executing steps are performed by said instant messaging client.

15.   (Currently Amended) The machine-readable computer-readable storage of claim 14, wherein said instant messaging client includes a Lotus Sametime (TM) type client.

16-17. (Cancelled)

4

18.   (Currently Amended) The ~~machine-readable~~ computer-readable storage of claim 11, ~~further comprising the step of: designating at least one inactive state associated with said designated action,~~ wherein said specified state change results from a state change for said at least one subscriber from ~~the designated~~ one or more possible inactive states to [[said]] one or more possible active states.

19.   (Cancelled)

20.   (Currently Amended) The ~~machine-readable~~ computer-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said at least one action further ~~comprising the step of:~~ comprises
        presenting within a graphical user interface a list of said subscribers in said group, ~~wherein said list includes at least one subscriber that is in an active state, and wherein said list includes said selected subscriber;~~ and within said graphical user interface, visually distinguishing said ~~selected~~ at least one subscriber from other subscribers in said list.

21.   (Currently Amended) An instant messaging system comprising:
        means for selecting ~~at least one~~ a group of subscribers of an instant messaging service~~, wherein said subscriber is in an inactive state~~;
        means for designating at least one action for an instant messaging client to automatically perform in response to a state of a subscriber changing to a specified state;
        means for associating said designated action with said group;
        means for automatically detecting that a state change of at least one of said subscribers in said group ~~changes to an~~ is the specified state ~~change~~; and
        means for automatically executing said designated action associated with said group for said at least one subscriber responsive to said detecting step.

5

22.   (Currently Amended) An instant messaging method comprising the steps of:

determining that a <u>group of</u> subscriber<u>s</u> of an instant messaging system [[has]] <u>have</u> a status of being <u>currently</u> unavailable for [[an]] instant message communication<u>s</u>;

indicating an ~~intension~~ <u>intention</u> to communicate with [[the]] <u>any of the</u> subscriber<u>s in said group</u> as ~~soon as the~~ <u>any of the</u> subscriber<u>s</u> become[[s]] available;

automatically detecting a status change resulting in <u>at least one of</u> said subscriber<u>s in said group</u> [[being]] <u>becoming</u> available for an instant message communication<u>s</u>; and

automatically initiating an instant messaging session that includes said <u>available</u> subscriber<u>s in said group</u> and said client responsive to said status change.

23.   (Currently Amended) An instant messaging system comprising the steps of:

means for determining that a <u>group of</u> subscriber<u>s</u> of an instant messaging system [[has]] <u>have</u> a status of being <u>currently</u> unavailable for [[an]] instant message communication<u>s</u>;

means for indicating an ~~intension~~ <u>intention</u> to communicate with [[the]] <u>any of the</u> subscriber<u>s in said group</u> as ~~soon as the~~ <u>any of the</u> subscriber<u>s</u> become[[s]] available;

means for automatically detecting a status change resulting in <u>at least one of</u> said subscriber<u>s in said group</u> [[being]] <u>becoming</u> available for an instant message communication<u>s</u>; and

means for automatically initiating an instant messaging session that includes said <u>available</u> subscriber<u>s in said group</u> and said client responsive to said status change.

24.   (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

designating at least one other action for an instant messaging client to automatically perform in response to a state of a specific subscriber in said group

changing to another specified state;

automatically detecting that a state change for said specific subscriber is the other specified state; and

automatically executing said other designated action responsive to said detecting step.

25.   (New) The method of claim 22, further comprising:

indicating an intention to communicate with a specific one of said subscribers only in response to a state of said specific subscriber changing to a specific available state; and

responsive to said status change resulting in said specific subscriber becoming available, excluding said specific subscriber from said instant messaging session unless said status change indicates the state of said specific subscriber has changed to said specific state.